

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5592

To establish grant programs to improve the health of border area residents and for bioterrorism preparedness in the border area, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 11, 2008

Mr. REYES (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. ORTIZ, and Mr. HINOJOSA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish grant programs to improve the health of border area residents and for bioterrorism preparedness in the border area, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Border Health Secu-
5 rity Act of 2008”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) BORDER AREA.—The term “border area”
2 has the meaning given the term “United States-
3 Mexico Border Area” in section 8 of the United
4 States-Mexico Border Health Commission Act (22
5 U.S.C. 290n–6).

6 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
7 the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

8 **SEC. 3. BORDER HEALTH GRANTS.**

9 (a) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—In this section,
10 the term “eligible entity” means a State, public institution
11 of higher education, local government, tribal government,
12 nonprofit health organization, or community health center
13 receiving assistance under section 330 of the Public
14 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b), that is located in
15 the border area.

16 (b) AUTHORIZATION.—From funds appropriated
17 under subsection (f), the Secretary, acting through the
18 United States members of the United States-Mexico Bor-
19 der Health Commission, shall award grants to eligible en-
20 tities to address priorities and recommendations to im-
21 prove the health of border area residents that are estab-
22 lished by—

23 (1) the United States members of the United
24 States-Mexico Border Health Commission;

25 (2) the State border health offices; and

1 (3) the Secretary.

2 (c) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity that desires a
3 grant under subsection (b) shall submit an application to
4 the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and con-
5 taining such information as the Secretary may require.

6 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
7 a grant under subsection (b) shall use the grant funds
8 for—

9 (1) programs relating to—

10 (A) maternal and child health;

11 (B) primary care and preventative health;

12 (C) public health and public health infra-
13 structure;

14 (D) health promotion;

15 (E) oral health;

16 (F) behavioral and mental health;

17 (G) substance abuse;

18 (H) health conditions that have a high
19 prevalence in the border area;

20 (I) medical and health services research;

21 (J) workforce training and development;

22 (K) community health workers or
23 promotoras;

1 (L) health care infrastructure problems in
2 the border area (including planning and con-
3 struction grants);

4 (M) health disparities in the border area;

5 (N) environmental health;

6 (O) health education; and

7 (P) outreach and enrollment services with
8 respect to Federal programs (including pro-
9 grams authorized under titles XIX and XXI of
10 the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.
11 and 1397aa et seq.)); and

12 (2) other programs determined appropriate by
13 the Secretary.

14 (e) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Amounts pro-
15 vided to an eligible entity awarded a grant under sub-
16 section (b) shall be used to supplement and not supplant
17 other funds available to the eligible entity to carry out the
18 activities described in subsection (d).

19 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
20 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
21 such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2009 and
22 each succeeding fiscal year.

1 **SEC. 4. BORDER BIOTERRORISM PREPAREDNESS GRANTS.**

2 (a) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.**—In this section,
3 the term “eligible entity” means a State, local govern-
4 ment, tribal government, or public health entity.

5 (b) **AUTHORIZATION.**—From funds appropriated
6 under subsection (e), the Secretary shall award grants to
7 eligible entities for bioterrorism preparedness in the bor-
8 der area.

9 (c) **APPLICATION.**—An eligible entity that desires a
10 grant under this section shall submit an application to the
11 Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing
12 such information as the Secretary may require.

13 (d) **USES OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity that receives
14 a grant under subsection (b) shall use the grant funds to,
15 in coordination with State and local bioterrorism pro-
16 grams—

17 (1) develop and implement bioterror prepared-
18 ness plans and readiness assessments and purchase
19 items necessary for such plans;

20 (2) coordinate bioterrorism and emergency pre-
21 paredness planning in the region;

22 (3) improve infrastructure, including syndrome
23 surveillance and laboratory capacity;

24 (4) create a health alert network, including risk
25 communication and information dissemination;

1 (5) educate and train clinicians, epidemiolo-
2 gists, laboratories, and emergency personnel; and

3 (6) carry out other such activities identified by
4 the Secretary, the United States-Mexico Border
5 Health Commission, State and local public health of-
6 fices, and border health offices.

7 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
8 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
9 \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 and such sums as may
10 be necessary for each succeeding fiscal year.

11 **SEC. 5. UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER HEALTH COMMIS-**
12 **SION ACT AMENDMENTS.**

13 The United States-Mexico Border Health Commis-
14 sion Act (22 U.S.C. 290n et seq.) is amended by adding
15 at the end the following:

16 **“SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

17 “There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
18 this Act \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 and such sums
19 as may be necessary for each succeeding fiscal year.”.

20 **SEC. 6. COORDINATION OF HEALTH SERVICES AND SUR-**
21 **VEILLANCE.**

22 The Secretary may coordinate with the Secretary of
23 Homeland Security in establishing a health alert system
24 that—

1 (1) alerts clinicians and public health officials
2 of emerging disease clusters and syndromes along
3 the border area; and

4 (2) is alerted to signs of health threats or bio-
5 terrorism along the border area.

6 **SEC. 7. BINATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE**
7 **AND HEALTH INSURANCE.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into a
9 contract with the Institute of Medicine for the conduct of
10 a study concerning binational public health infrastructure
11 and health insurance efforts. In conducting such study,
12 the Institute shall solicit input from border health experts
13 and health insurance issuers.

14 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
15 on which the Secretary enters into the contract under sub-
16 section (a), the Institute of Medicine shall submit to the
17 Secretary and the appropriate committees of Congress a
18 report concerning the study conducted under such con-
19 tract. Such report shall include the recommendations of
20 the Institute on ways to expand or improve binational pub-
21 lic health infrastructure and health insurance efforts.

1 **SEC. 8. PROVISION OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE**
2 **TO CONGRESS.**

3 Section 5 of the United States-Mexico Border Health
4 Commission Act (22 U.S.C. 290n-3) is amended by add-
5 ing at the end the following:

6 “(d) PROVIDING ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS
7 TO CONGRESS.—A member of the Commission, or an indi-
8 vidual who is on the staff of the Commission, may at any
9 time provide advice or recommendations to Congress con-
10 cerning issues that are considered by the Commission.
11 Such advice or recommendations may be provided whether
12 or not a request for such advice or recommendations is
13 made by a member of Congress and regardless of whether
14 the member or individual is authorized to provide such ad-
15 vice or recommendations by the Commission or any other
16 Federal official.”.

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